

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Schneller Inc

Florida Manufacturing Extension Partnership

Schneller Stabilizes Business During Economic Downturn Using Lean Manufacturing Techniques

Client Profile:

Schneller Inc.'s Pinellas Park, Florida division employs 135 and is a world leader in the manufacture of custom specialty laminates and coated fabrics for transportation interiors. The majority of Schneller's sales are concentrated in the aviation market. These products are for use in aircraft up to and including large wide-body passenger aircraft. The company's products are globally supplied to virtually all aircraft manufacturers and airlines.

Situation:

To maintain and improve its on-time delivery and first-time quality, Schneller decided to improve lead-time capability to stay ahead of competition and exceed customer's delivery requirements while maintaining a high standard of quality. The company decided to streamline production processes and maximize existing capital equipment utilization by implementing lean manufacturing practices in the coating, screening, laminating, and press operations. As a client of the Florida Manufacturing Extension Partnership (Florida MEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate, Schneller once again turned to the organization for assistance.

Solution:

Florida MEP worked with Schneller's cross-functional team to conduct lean manufacturing training and to implement processes in the press and quality areas. Through training in set-up reduction, productivity improvement, and process improvements, the Schneller team was able to significantly improve lead-time capability and remove waste from all its manufacturing processes to lower costs, inventory levels and work-in-process. Additionally, workstations have been redesigned to provide all required information and tools at point of use, and Florida MEP revised the plant layout to avoid waste of motion.

Results:

Reduced run time by 6 percent.

Decreased set-up time by 41 percent.

Reduced lead time from 22.5 days to 13.5 days.

Reduced work-in-process by 75 percent in the press room operation and 75 percent at inspection.

Reduced lead time by 66 percent in the press room and 75 percent at

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inspection.

Reduced press room cycle times by 38 percent and inspection by 50 percent.

Increased laminate sheet production from 14 to 20 per day.

Testimonial:

"If not for the Florida Manufacturing Extension Partnership, lean manufacturing concepts, and the kaizen events, I am sure Schneller Inc. could not be as stable or profitable a company as we are today. The timing for this could not have been more beneficial to our organization in this economic downturn."

Tom Pfeiffer, Plant Manager